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Louisiana Student Government Delegates Meet With Presidential Candidates in New Hampshire

Fifty representatives of Louisiana's public university Student Government and Student Bar Associations spent four days in Manchester, New Hampshire, last week interacting with and asking pointed policy questions of many of the top 2004 presidential candidates, including Howard Dean, John Kerry, Joseph Lieberman, Carol Moseley Braun, and General Wesley Clark. Even perennial candidate Lyndon LaRouche was there. The students also learned about a broad range of highly-charged political issues from nationally-known experts in areas ranging from homeland security and human rights to social security and domestic violence. Among the session speakers were such luminaries as media mogul Ted Turner and former U.S. Secretary of Education William Bennett.

It was all part of the New England College "College Convention 2004," where over 1,000 college and high school students were able to "join each of the major presidential candidates, members of the media, and a wide variety of political interest groups in an exciting political convention environment...[and] see first hand the excitement of the New Hampshire 'First in the Nation' Presidential Primary," according to event billing. The College Convention took place January 7-10 at the Center of New Hampshire Holiday Inn.

"It was a very exhilarating experience," said Katreshia Louis, President of the Southern University Law Center Student Bar Association and Chair of Louisiana's Council of Student Body Presidents (COSBP). "It was almost surreal being so close to the candidates and talking directly with them - a lot different from just watching them on CNN."

Louis said that it was particularly gratifying to be surrounded by students her own age who were knowledgeable and concerned about the issues facing our nation. She added that Louisiana's contingent represented Louisiana's colleges and universities well at the event.

"I think our students were among the most well-informed and engaged at the event. It spoke very well of the quality of our public colleges and universities in Louisiana," Louis said.

The event provided open question-and-answer forums with each of the candidates in attendance in a traditional "town-meeting" setting, as well as breakout and plenary sessions on such topics as "Social

Security: Will It Be There For You?” and “Invest In Your Democracy: Public Funds For Federal Elections.”

(More)

Student Government Delegates
ADD ONE

“The convention was an excellent opportunity for our student leaders across the state to experience the democratic process in full,” said Commissioner of Higher Education E. Joseph Savoie. “The experience they bring back with them will make them more effective participants in the political process, and that’s good for Louisiana’s future.”

- 30 -